

**Minutes of Meeting
Elected Officials
May 20, 2015
9:00 a.m.**

The Kootenai County Board of Commissioners: Chairman David Stewart, Commissioner Dan Green, and Commissioner Marc Eberlein met to discuss the following agenda items. Also present were Clerk Jim Brannon, Chief Deputy Clerk Pat Raffee, Human Resources Director Skye Reynolds, Sheriff Ben Wolfinger, Undersheriff Dan Mattos, Prosecutor Barry McHugh, Chief Deputy Prosecutor Barry Black, Assessor Mike McDowell, Chief Deputy Assessor Richard Houser, Treasurer Steve Matheson, Chief Deputy Treasurer Laurie Thomas, Coroner Warren Keene, and Deputy Clerk Grace Blomgren.

- A. Call to Order:** Chairman David Stewart called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.
- B. Introductions:** There were no introductions made.
- C. Changes to the Agenda:** There were no changes made to the agenda.
- D. Old Business:** There was no old business discussed.
- E. New Business: Compensation Survey results**

Human Resources Director Skye Reynolds summarized the two proprietary compensation survey reports, noting that the elected officials had chosen a very narrowly defined market area, and that 1/3 of the comparable pay results were sourced from cities or Washington wages. She read an email from the principal at one of the consulting firms and concurred with her view that the preponderance of cities versus counties providing comparable wage input, and the fact that Washington pay scales are higher, skewed the findings. However, Ms. Reynolds said the reports indicated Kootenai County pay was 15.4% behind the market defined by the elected officials, 18% behind the Idaho regional market, and 20% behind the private sector market. She noted elected officials' pay was 10% behind the market, and that adding benefits put the County an additional 2% behind the market on top of previously mentioned wage disparities.

Clerk Jim Brannon noted the overall percentages mask far greater disparity in some jobs – that the HR Director and the Accounting Manager jobs were 50% behind the market, for example – while other jobs were very near the market. He said he was asked by Chairman Stewart to compile raise projections for all employees at 4%, 5% and 8% increases. He passed out reports showing those ranges, by employee, by department, and with sub-totals by elected official. Mr. Brannon said the overall costs to the FY16 budget with benefit costs included would be \$1.3 million (at 4%); \$1.6 million (at 5%); and \$2.6 million (at 8%).

The attendees discussed numerous related issues, including the added cost to commute to Spokane for work, the lack of solid County turnover data, whether more comprehensive studies were needed to address big pay gaps in some jobs while leaving other jobs pay unchanged, and how many years it might be before the County could afford to remedy the salary discrepancies completely. They noted the difficulty of balancing fair compensation to employees with the responsibility to keep taxes low for citizens, and that new growth figures weren't yet available to know how many new tax dollars might be available in FY16 from that source.

Commissioner Dan Green reiterated that whatever input the elected officials offered the final decision was the Board's. Commissioner Marc Eberlein said he wanted the survey results ignored since he thought they were inaccurate. Chairman Stewart said he wanted to address some of the pay issues in the FY16 budget process.

Responding to Chairman Stewart's request, Ms. Reynolds stated that as an advocate for all employees she recommended the 8% increase as it was comparable to the raises given to the Sheriff's employees. Undersheriff Dan Mattos agreed with Clerk Brannon that jobs with huge disparities in pay should get more than the blanket increase given to the rest of the County.

Treasurer Steve Matheson asked what the Board's intention was: to keep the County's budget at approximately \$80 million, or to give employees raises? Chairman Stewart said he would like be willing to raise the budget and wanted to give employees raises. Commissioner Green was noncommittal. Commissioner Eberlein said he wanted to keep the budget the same as FY15. Mr. Matheson noted that if some of his staff were to receive very large pay increases he would look closely at whether the right people were in the jobs.

The preference by the elected officials was unanimous about whatever raise pool was to be allocated by the Board, the specific raise funds should be distributed to individual employees at the elected officials' discretion.

Chairman Stewart called for a short break at 10:35 a.m.

Chairman Stewart reconvened the meeting at 10:40 a.m.

New Business: Mass Fatalities

Coroner Warren Keene described the potential for a major disaster involving more than five deaths, and his need for a refrigerated truck and a commercially-licensed (CDL) driver. Attendees offered him ideas for borrowing the truck rather than purchasing one, and Sheriff Ben Wolfinger noted that some of his staff had CDL operating licenses.

The other two agenda items, At Will versus For Cause, and Fleet Management, were tabled to a future meeting.

- F. Staff Reports:** There were no staff reports.
- G. Public Comment:** This section is reserved for citizens wishing to address the Board regarding a County related issue. There was no public comment.

With no further business, Chairman Stewart adjourned the meeting at 11:53 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

JIM BRANNON, CLERK

DAVID STEWART, CHAIRMAN

BY: _____
Grace Blomgren, Deputy Clerk
